

CLAIMS

1.-19. (Previously Cancelled)

20. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

receiving selection of (1) a first program from a first program source, (2) a second program from a second program source, (3) a first program processing function for the first program, and (4) a second program processing function for the second program;

synchronizing, prior to initiating the first program processing function, (1) a first running elapsed scheduling time clock that provides a current running elapsed time of day indicating an amount of time that has already elapsed and used for scheduling determining when a scheduled start time in the future occurs for the first program processing function, and to (2) a current running elapsed time of day indicating an amount of time that has already elapsed at of a clock of the first program source;

comparing the synchronized first running elapsed scheduling time clock to the scheduled start time for the first program processing function, as time indicated by the synchronized first running elapsed scheduling time clock gets closer to the scheduled start time for the first program processing function, in order to determine when to initiate the first program processing function;

initiating the first program processing function based on the comparing of the synchronized first running elapsed scheduling time clock and the scheduled start time for the first program processing function;

synchronizing, prior to initiating the second program processing function, (1) a second running elapsed scheduling time clock that provides a current running elapsed

time of day indicating an amount of time that has already elapsed and used for scheduling
determining when a scheduled start time in the future occurs for the second program
processing function, and to (2) a current running elapsed time of day indicating an
amount of time that has already elapsed at of a clock of the second program source;

comparing the synchronized second running elapsed scheduling time clock to the
scheduled start time for the second program processing function, as time indicated by the
synchronized second running elapsed scheduling time clock gets closer to the scheduled
start time for the second program processing function, in order to determine when to
initiate the second program processing function; and

initiating the second program processing function based on the comparing of the
synchronized second running elapsed scheduling time clock and the scheduled start time
for the second program processing function.

21. (Cancelled) The method of claim 20 wherein:
the current running time of day used for scheduling the first program processing
function is stored as a scheduling clock, and
the current running time of day used for scheduling the second program
processing function is also stored as the scheduling clock.

22. (Cancelled) The method of claim 20 wherein:
the current running time of day used for scheduling the first program processing
function is stored as a first scheduling clock, and
the current running time of day used for scheduling the second program

processing function is stored as a second scheduling clock.

23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 22 20 further comprising simultaneously maintaining, for at least a period of time, both (1) the synchronized first running elapsed scheduling time clock, and (2) the synchronized second running elapsed scheduling time clock.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20 wherein the first programming processing function comprises at least one from a group consisting of display, record, and playback.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein the group further comprises: program transmission, program standards conversion, program encryption, program decryption, program scrambling, and program decoding.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 20 further comprising terminating the second program processing function based on the current synchronized second running elapsed scheduling time clock of day used for scheduling the second program processing function.

27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 20 further comprising receiving current time reference information that wherein the current running elapsed time of day indicating the amount of time that has already elapsed at the first program

source comprises System Time Table (STT) data of an MPEG compliant data stream.

28. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 20 further comprising receiving (1) first current time reference information from the current running elapsed time of day indicating the amount of time that has already elapsed at the first program source, and (2) a second current time reference information from the current running elapsed time of day indicating the amount of time that has already elapsed at the second program source;

wherein synchronizing the current running time of day used for scheduling the first program processing function is based on the first current time reference information, and synchronizing the current running time of day used for scheduling the second program processing function is based on the second current time reference information.

29. (Currently Amended) A receiving system comprising a processor, the processor programmed:

to provide a guide operable by a user (1) to select a first program from a first program source, (2) to select a second program from a second program source, (3) to select a first program processing function for the first program, and (4) to select a second program processing function for the second program;

to synchronize, prior to initiating the first program processing function, (1) a first running elapsed scheduling time clock that provides a current running elapsed time of day indicating an amount of time that has already elapsed and used for scheduling determining when a scheduled start time in the future occurs for the first program

processing function, and to (2) a current running elapsed time of day indicating an amount of time that has already elapsed at of a clock of the first program source;

to compare the synchronized first running elapsed scheduling time clock to the scheduled start time for the first program processing function, as time indicated by the synchronized first running elapsed scheduling time clock gets closer to the scheduled start time for the first program processing function, in order to determine when to initiate the first program processing function;

to initiate the first program processing function based on the comparing of the synchronized first running elapsed scheduling time clock and the scheduled start time for the first program processing function;

to synchronize, prior to initiating the second program processing function, (1) a second running elapsed scheduling time clock that provides a current running elapsed time of day indicating an amount of time that has already elapsed and used for scheduling determining when a scheduled start time in the future occurs for the second program processing function, and to (2) a current running elapsed time of day indicating an amount of time that has already elapsed at of a clock of the second program source;

to compare the synchronized second running elapsed scheduling time clock to the scheduled start time for the second program processing function, as time indicated by the synchronized second running elapsed scheduling time clock gets closer to the scheduled start time for the second program processing function, in order to determine when to initiate the second program processing function; and

to initiate the second program processing function based on the comparing of the synchronized second running elapsed scheduling time clock and the scheduled start time

for the second program processing function.

30. (Cancelled) The system of claim 29 wherein:
the current running time of day used for scheduling the first program processing function is stored as a scheduling clock, and
the current running time of day used for scheduling the second program processing function is also stored as the scheduling clock.

31. (Cancelled) The system of claim 29 wherein:
the current running time of day used for scheduling the first program processing function is stored as a first scheduling clock, and
the current running time of day used for scheduling the second program processing function is stored as a second scheduling clock.

32. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 34 29 wherein the processor is programmed to simultaneously maintain, for at least a period of time, both (1) the synchronized first running elapsed scheduling time clock, and (2) the synchronized second running elapsed scheduling time clock.

33. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 29 wherein the processor is programmed to terminate the second program processing function based on the current synchronized second running elapsed scheduling time clock of day used for scheduling the second program processing function.

34. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 29 wherein the ~~system is operable to receive current time reference information that current running elapsed time of day indicating the amount of time that has already elapsed at the first program source~~ comprises System Time Table (STT) data of an MPEG compliant data stream.

35. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 29 wherein:
~~the processor is further programmed to receive (1) first current time reference information from the current running elapsed time of day indicating the amount of time that has already elapsed at the first program source, and (2) a second current time reference information from the current running elapsed time of day indicating the amount of time that has already elapsed at the second program source;~~
~~synchronizing the current running time of day used for scheduling the first program processing function is based on the first current time reference information, and synchronizing the current running time of day used for scheduling the second program processing function is based on the second current time reference information.~~

36. (Currently Amended) A storage medium comprising programmed instructions for performing at least the following:
receiving selection of (1) a first program from a first program source, (2) a second program from a second program source, (3) a first program processing function for the first program, and (4) a second program processing function for the second program;
synchronizing, prior to initiating the first program processing function, (1) ~~a first~~

running elapsed scheduling time clock that provides a current running elapsed time of day indicating an amount of time that has already elapsed and used for scheduling determining when a scheduled start time in the future occurs for the first program processing function, and to (2) a current running elapsed time of day indicating an amount of time that has already elapsed at of a clock of the first program source;

comparing the synchronized first running elapsed scheduling time clock to the scheduled start time for the first program processing function, as time indicated by the synchronized first running elapsed scheduling time clock gets closer to the scheduled start time for the first program processing function, in order to determine when to initiate the first program processing function;

initiating the first program processing function based on the comparing of the synchronized first running elapsed scheduling time clock and the scheduled start time for the first program processing function;

synchronizing, prior to initiating the second program processing function, (1) a second running elapsed scheduling time clock that provides a current running elapsed time of day indicating an amount of time that has already elapsed and used for scheduling determining when a scheduled start time in the future occurs for the second program processing function, and to (2) a current running elapsed time of day indicating an amount of time that has already elapsed at of a clock of the second program source;

comparing the synchronized second running elapsed scheduling time clock to the scheduled start time for the second program processing function, as time indicated by the synchronized second running elapsed scheduling time clock gets closer to the scheduled start time for the second program processing function, in order to determine when to

initiate the second program processing function; and

initiating the second program processing function based on the comparing of the synchronized second running elapsed scheduling time clock and the scheduled start time for the second program processing function.

37. (Currently Amended) The storage medium of claim 36 wherein:
~~the current running time of day used for scheduling the first program processing function is stored as a first scheduling clock,~~

~~the current running time of day used for scheduling the second program processing function is stored as a second scheduling clock, and~~

the programmed instructions are further for performing simultaneously maintaining, for at least a period of time, both (1) the synchronized first running elapsed scheduling time clock, and (2) the synchronized second running elapsed scheduling time clock.

38. (Currently Amended) The storage medium of claim 36 wherein:
~~the programmed instructions are further for performing receiving (1) first current time reference information from the current running elapsed time of day indicating the amount of time that has already elapsed at the first program source, and (2) a second current time reference information from the current running elapsed time of day indicating the amount of time that has already elapsed at the second program source;~~
~~synchronizing the current running time of day used for scheduling the first program processing function is based on the first current time reference information, and~~

synchronizing the current running time of day used for scheduling the second program processing function is based on the second current time reference information.